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CURB Parking System Upgrades Completed

RENO, NEVADA--Upgrades to the City of Reno multi-space parking system by CURB Systems have been completed today according to CURB President Kane Dutt. These upgrades to the parking system's 77 kiosks included new firmware that enable patrons of the system to more quickly and simply pay for parking, and also included new electrical power sources and new communication equipment. The system currently covers 1,329 parking spaces compared to the 1,180 parking spaces that previously had mechanical meters.

"As a result of patron feedback and working with the City of Reno, CURB identified problems that were occurring for patrons who were parking in city metered parking spaces," explained Dutt. "Occasional slow credit card processing, keypad issues and power outages also created confusion for patrons."

The company implemented clearer language for purchasing maximum time, changed the time remaining component and changed the credit card prompt from time to dollars.

The CURB parking system's Reno installation is the first project for the local company which has 43 Northern Nevada investors. It is the only parking system in the industry to utilize a large video screen on its kiosks and the process involved a learning curve for the company. The use of a video screen provides for better communication with users and can easily be changed to match patron preferences.

To date, the company has processed more than 150,000 transactions and received 81 formal complaints through the city's Reno Direct complaint processing center. Informal complaints were also processed by CURB and referred from the city.

"We believe that the payment process will now be the simplest of any multi-space parking system in the industry," said Dutt. "A patron simply enters in the parking space number; presses enter and feeds coins into the meter. For credit card payment, instead of feeding coins, simply swipe the card, select the dollar amount to pay and press confirm."

CURB has pulled nearly two miles of electrical wiring to the kiosks to replace the battery and electrical power combination that was utilized previously. A new communication system has significantly increased processing speed.

The video screens now display free parking from 6 p.m. to 9 a.m. to prompt patrons that it is not necessary to pay for parking during these hours. The company has also enabled QR codes and near field payment on each kiosk.

A large green circle on the screen provides confirmation that the kiosk is online and functioning. The absence of the green circle will alert patrons, enforcement officers and CURB maintenance personnel that the kiosk is offline.

An important feature of the system is the ability to pay for any parking space at any kiosk, via cell phone and the internet. Even if a kiosk is disabled,



241 Ridge Street
Suite 480
Reno, Nevada 89501

Tel. 775.236.5650
Fax. 775.236.5649

Web. curbsys.com

patrons have easy alternatives to pay for parking. Paid parking status is displayed on handheld devices for city enforcement officers.

After lengthy testing of in-ground sensor technology by CURB and the accuracy problems and limited capabilities of such technology as demonstrated in San Francisco and Sausalito installations, CURB has helped to develop and test optical sensor technology. This technology has received high marks in testing in New York City and San Francisco. By using images of parked autos, the optical sensor system is not susceptible to the electro-magnetic interference and “false-positive” issues experienced by in-ground sensors.

Use of integrated image technology provides evidence that the ticketed vehicle is indeed the vehicle that was in violation. This evidence trail should reduce the number of ticket disputes and save time for the city clerk’s office and the municipal court.

CURB is currently testing the system in Reno on 103 parking spaces. The city is evaluating the technology before expanding the sensor coverage.

Unfortunately, the recession has negatively affected the city’s parking franchise with reduced retail sales and high office vacancies downtown. The busiest parking district by the courthouse has also been affected by the half-day closure of the courthouse on Fridays, continued Dutt. However, Dutt is optimistic that the parking franchise will trend upwards as more patrons utilize the credit card feature, pay with cell phone or pay via the internet. The approval of the optical sensor technology will also provide enforcement officers with easy identification and location of violations.

“CURB understands that the past technical problems negatively impacted citizens’ experience with the parking system from occasional slow responding and non-responding kiosks that confused and frustrated the parking public,” said Dutt. “Now, with the technical solutions installed, the public is experiencing kiosks that are responsive and easy to use. The system works well and will deliver the benefits of a modern multi-space parking system.”

In May, the City of Reno had provided notice to CURB to implement corrections to the parking system. With the short extension to September 26 that was granted at the last city council meeting, CURB has fully addressed every issue in the city notice.

